

Attorney Docket No. P11119-US1
Customer Number 27045

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

1.) Claim Amendments

The Applicants have amended claims 1, 2, 7, 9, 11, 37, 41, and 44-49. Claims 3-6, 8, 10, 12-36, 43, and 50 have been canceled. Accordingly, claims 1-2, 7, 9, 11, 37-42, and 44-49 are pending in the application. Favorable reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

2.) Allowable Subject Matter

On page 4 of the Office Action, the Examiner objected to claims 8, 9, 43, and 50 as being dependent upon rejected base claims, but indicated that they would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims. The Applicants have taken the following steps to obtain the allowance of all pending claims and to place the application in condition for allowance:

The limitation of allowable claim 8, which depended directly from base claim 1, has been incorporated into base claim 1, and claim 8 has been canceled. Therefore, the allowance of amended claim 1 and dependent claims 2, 7, and 11 is respectfully requested.

Claim 9 has been rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of base claim 1. Therefore, the allowance of amended claim 9 and dependent claims 2, 7, and 11 is respectfully requested.

The limitation of allowable claim 43, which depended directly from base claim 37, has been incorporated into base claim 37, and claim 43 has been canceled. Therefore, the allowance of amended claim 37 and dependent claims 38-42 is respectfully requested.

The limitation of allowable claim 50, which depended directly from base claim 44, has been incorporated into base claim 44, and claim 50 has been canceled. Therefore, the allowance of amended claim 44 and dependent claims 45-49 is respectfully requested.

Amendment - PAGE 7 of 8
EUS/J/P/05-9227

Attorney Docket No. P11119-US1
Customer Number 27045

3.) Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

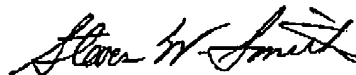
The Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, 7, 11, 12, 37-42 and 44-49 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Groehn et al. (WO 99/33300). The Applicants respectfully submit this rejection has been overcome by the amendments above relating to allowable subject matter. Therefore, the withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing remarks, the Applicants believe all of the claims currently pending in the Application to be in a condition for allowance. The Applicants, therefore, respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw all rejections and issue a Notice of Allowance for claims 1-2, 7, 9, 11, 37-42, and 44-49.

The Applicants request a telephonic interview if the Examiner has any questions or requires any additional information that would expedite the prosecution of the Application.

Respectfully submitted,



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Amendment - PAGE 8 of 8
EUS/J/P/05-9227